

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 NEA-10 EUR-25 SY-10 USSS-00 OPR-02

AID-20 SSO-00 A-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 OMB-01 DRC-01 /199 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1381

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CINCLANT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1601

CINCLANT AND CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: US SO PFOR MARR

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT SIAD ON MIDDLE EAST

1. SUMMARY: I DELIVERED PRESIDENT NIXON'S OCTOBER 27 LETTER ON MIDDLE EAST TO PRESIDENT SIAD OCTOBER 31. SIAD REPEATED ARAB CHARGES OF DIRECT U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN FIGHTING BUT ADMITTED ARAB SOURCES MIGHT BE PREJUDICED. HE STRESSED SOMALI DESIRE FOR A SETTLEMENT IN MIDDLE EAST AND SIAD DIFFERENCES OF VIEW BETWEEN US AND SOMALI ON MIDDLE EAST DID NOT RPT NOT AFFECT SOMALI DESIRE FOR BETTER US/SOMALI RELATIONS.

2. AFTER READING LETTER TO SIAD, I REITERATED FACT THAT US DOES NOT HAVE ANY AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN FIGHTING IN MIDDLE EAST. SIAD BROKE IN TO ASK, "WHY DO YOU DENY IT?" I SAID WE DENIED THESE REPORTS BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT RPT
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NOT TRUE. SIAD THEN MENTIONED U.S. PLANE ALLEGEDLY SHOT DOWN

OVER DAMASCUS AND SAID ARABS CLAIM ISRAELIS COULD NEVER HAVE
CROSSED SUEZ CANAL BUT FOR MAJOR DIRECT U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT
IN THE FIGHTING. SIAD SAID HE FELT U.S. EFFORTS TO RESUPPLY
ISRAEL WERE "UNDERSTANDABLE" BUT THAT U.S. MILITARY PARTICIPATION
IN FIGHTING, AS REPORTED BY ARABS, WAS ENDANGERING PEACE OF WORLD.
I REITERATED THAT MANY CHARGES ARE LEVELED IN TIME OF WAR AND
THAT I WAS AUTHORIZED TO DENY OFFICIALLY THAT THERE HAD BEEN ANY
U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING.

3. SIAD THEN PASSED TO AN EXPOSITION OF THE ORIGINS AND HIS-
TORY OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION WHICH WAS NOTEWORTHY ONLY FOR
HIS REPEATED COMMENTS THAT ISRAEL HAD THE RIGHT TO EXISTENCE.
I RESPONDED WITH OUR OWN INTERPRETATION OF THE EVENTS OF RECENT
YEARS, CONCLUDING BY EMPHASIZING THAT WE WERE NOW SEEKING A
LASTING SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND HOPED OTHER COUNTRIES
INTERESTED IN SUCH A SETTLEMENT WOULD SUPPORT THE CURRENT
EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE IT. SIAD SAID HE TOO FELT IT CRITICAL TO
ACHIEVE A LASTING SETTLEMENT AND WAS EMPHASIZING TO HIS ARAB
FRIENDS THAT THEY MUST GIVE UP ANY IDEA OF ELIMINATING THE STATE
OF ISRAEL.

4. IN CONCLUDING THIS PART OF OUR CONVERSATION, SIAD SAID HE
WISHED ME TO CONVEY HIS THANKS TO PRESIDENT NIXON FOR HIS RE-
SPONSE TO SIAD'S LETTER. SIAD ALSO WISHED ME TO NOTE THAT THE
DIFFERENCES OF VIEW BETWEEN THE US AND SOMALIA ON MIDDLE EAST
ISSUES DID NOT ALTER SOMALIA'S DESIRE FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH
US. SOMALI CRITICISM OF U.S. POSITION IN MIDDLE EAST IS MERELY
DESIGNED TO INCREASE THE PRESSURES FOR A "REASONABLE" MIDDLE
EAST SETTLEMENT - IT IS NOT AIMED AT US AS SUCH. I SAID WE
TOO WANTED AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND SOMALIA
AND WOULD WORK WITH SIAD TO THAT END.

5. LATER IN CONVERSATION I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR SOMALI
PROTECTION OF U.S. PERSONNEL AND INSTALLATIONS DURING THIS
PERIOD OF MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS. SIAD SAID, "NO ONE COULD TOUCH
AN AMERICAN" IN SOMALIA.

6. AFTER CONVERSATION HAD TOUCHED ON OTHER MATTERS (REPORTED
SEPARATELY), SIAD ASKED ABOUT SIGNIFICANCE OF REPORTED MOVEMENT
OF ELEMENTS OF U.S. SEVENTH FLEET INTO INDIAN OCEAN. I NOTED
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THAT WE DID NOT FEEL WE WERE IN SITUATION OF CONFRONTATION
WITH SOVIET UNION AND THAT MOVEMENTS OF SEVENTH FLEET TASK FORCE
DID NOT RPT NOT ALTER THAT SITUATION.

7. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR FROM OUR CONVERSATION THAT SIAD IS
EMOTIONALLY DISPOSED TO CREDIT THE WILDEST ARAB CHARGES OF U.S.
INTERVENTION IN MIDDLE EAST. IN FACE MY EMPHATIC DENIALS HE
ADMITTED HIS INFORMATION CAME ONLY FROM ARAB SOURCES AND APPEARED

TO GRANT POSSIBILITY THESE MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT LESS THAN RELIABLE.
I FEAR THIS RELATIVE BALANCE WILL BE SHORT-LIVED HOWEVER AND
THAT WE MUST EXPECT SIAD WILL BE PRONE TO BELIEVE AND ON OCCASION
TO ECHO SUCH CHARGES IN FUTURE, DESPITE HIS APPARENTLY SINCERE
DESIRE FOR SOME IMPROVEMENT IN US/SOMALI RELATIONS.
KIRK

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